

Science, Service, Stewardship



Billfish Issues

HMS AP Meeting May 11-13, 2010

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Summary of ICCAT Sailfish (SAI) Deliberations

- **Stock Status:**
 - B2006/Bmsy - Possibly < 1.0
 - F2007/Fmsy - Possibly > 1.0
 - ICCAT - No management measures currently in effect
 - U.S. – Commercial prohibition; Min. size limit; No bag limit
- **2009 ICCAT Meeting:**
 - U.S. proposed to require that all SAI brought to PLL vessels be released in a manner that maximizes their survival
 - Alternative proposal which had much support at ICCAT was the mandatory release of live sailfish from all fishing vessels
 - U.S. requested additional time to consider implications of the alternative proposal and requested postponement until 2010



Implications of ICCAT Sailfish Deliberations

Issue:

- There are currently no changes regarding SAI management at the international or domestic level

We value your input.....

- NMFS is interested in hearing your views on potential ICCAT and domestic management measures for SAI if similar issues should arise in the future



Roundscale Spearfish (RSS) and White Marlin (WHM)

Background:

- Magnuson-Stevens Act defines “HMS” to include marlin in the genus *Tetrapturus spp.* and *Makaira spp.*
- Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions at 50 CFR 600.10:
 - Defines billfish as blue marlin, longbill spearfish, sailfish, or white marlin
 - Defines white marlin as *Tetrapturus albidus*
- Two species (WHM & RSS) are often caught in the same fishery and frequently misidentified



Roundscale Spearfish (RSS) and White Marlin (WHM)

Issues:

- Roundscale spearfish (*Tetrapturus georgii*) confirmed in scientific literature, but is not currently in the HMS management unit
- White marlin genus changed from *Tetrapturus* to *Kajikia*, but the change is not reflected in the Code of Federal Regulations

Potential changes to the management unit may be made through the framework process established in the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP



Roundscale Spearfish Management Needs

NMFS is considering management measures for RSS that are similar to WHM:

- WHM = 66" LJFL; no bag limit; no commercial retention, rod & reel only
- Species “complex approach” would be consistent with recent management measures for WHM
- Could mitigate difficulties with at sea identification
- Would not impact the ability to retain WHM
- “Marlin 250 Landings Limit” – Any changes for RSS should not affect U.S. compliance with international obligations
- Could allow for potential future changes based upon new information from research (*i.e.*, different size at maturity) and stock assessments



White Marlin Genus Change

NMFS will change the genus of white marlin to *Kajikia* in the Code of Federal Regulations

- Reflects recent acceptance of the genus change in the scientific community
 - Integrated Taxonomic Information System, of which NOAA is a partner
 - American Fisheries Society
- NMFS' adoption of the genus change for white marlin will not affect the management of Atlantic white marlin



We Value Your Input....

- Management measures for roundscale spearfish
- White marlin genus change in CFR



Pelagic Longline Billfish Bycatch

Fishery Management Plans:

1988 Billfish FMP

1999 Amendment 1 to the Billfish FMP

2006 Consolidated HMS FMP

Conservation measures for billfish related to the PLL fishery include:

1988 - Billfish possession prohibited on PLL vessels; no sale of billfish

1992 - Observer requirement

1999 - Limited access implemented

2000 - Line clippers and dipnets required

2000 - DeSoto Canyon closure in GOM

2000 - Live bait prohibition in the GOM



Pelagic Longline Billfish Bycatch (cont.)

Conservation measures for billfish related to the PLL fishery (cont.):

2001 - Florida East Coast and Charleston Bump closures (Other closures not listed here have been implemented at other times and for other reasons.

Those other closures also provide conservation benefits for billfish)

2001 - Corrodible hooks, de-hooking devices, handling & release guidelines

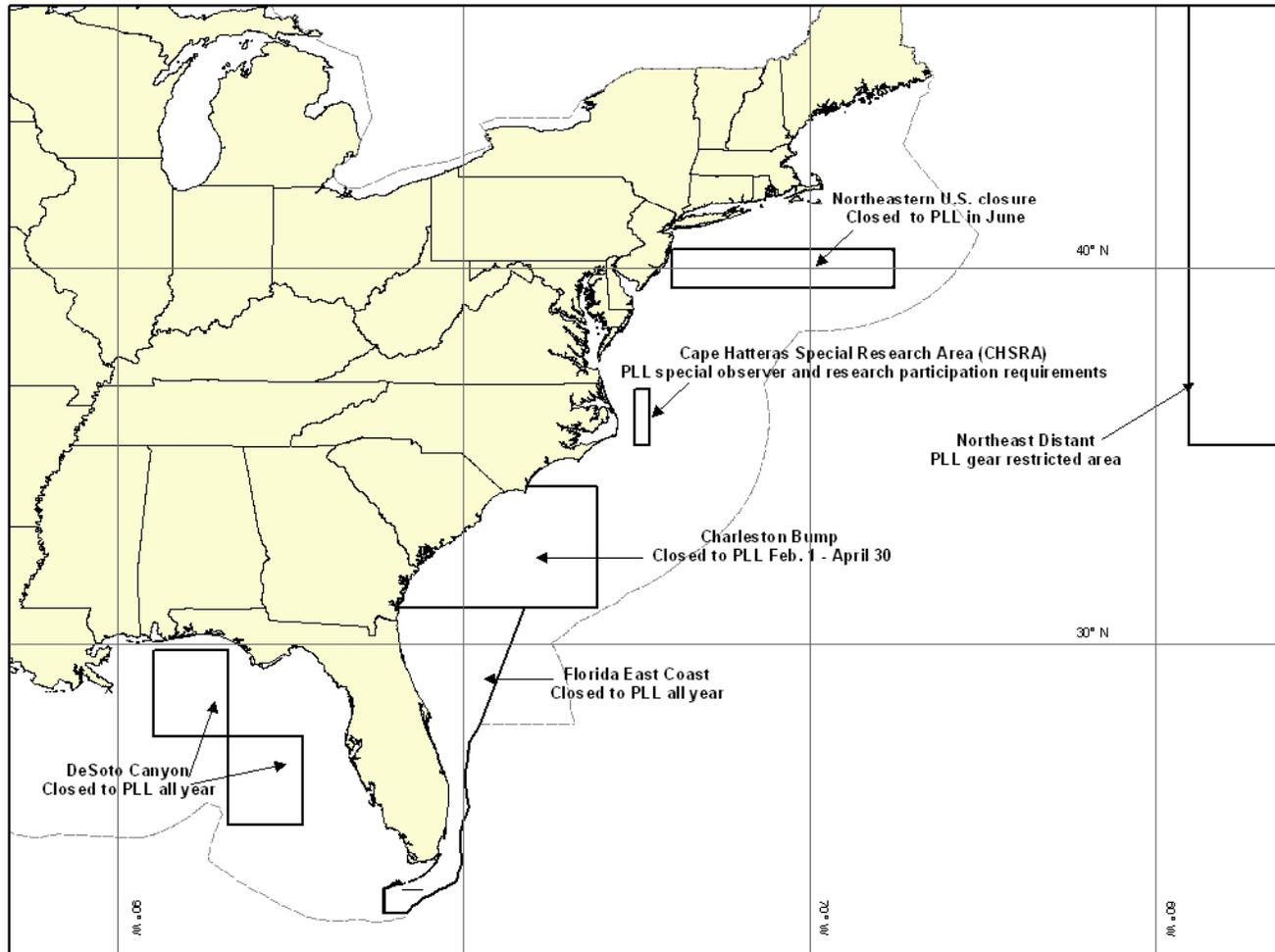
2003 - VMS requirement

2004 - Circle hook and bait requirement

2006 - Mandatory safe handling & release workshops

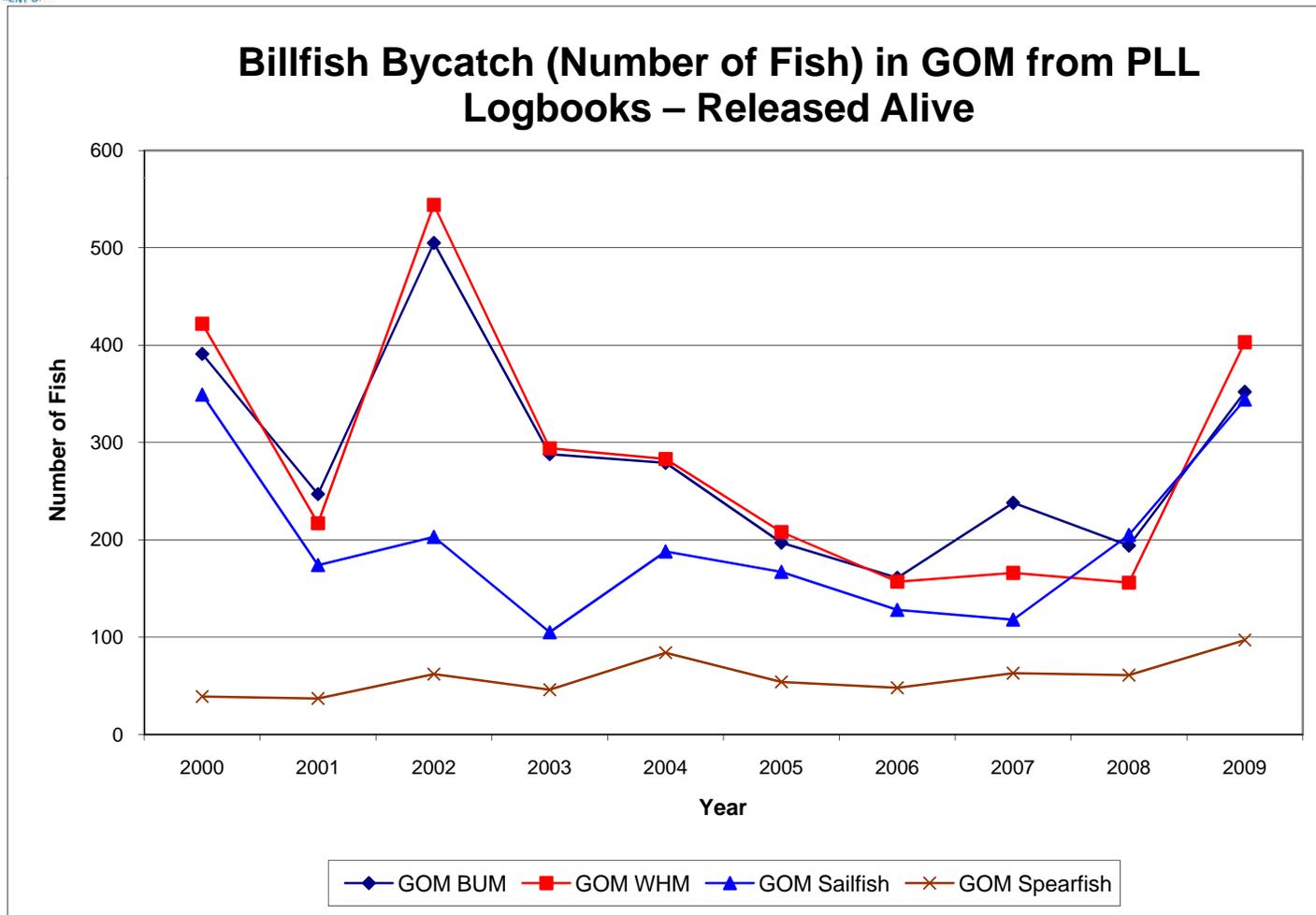


Pelagic Longline Closed Areas



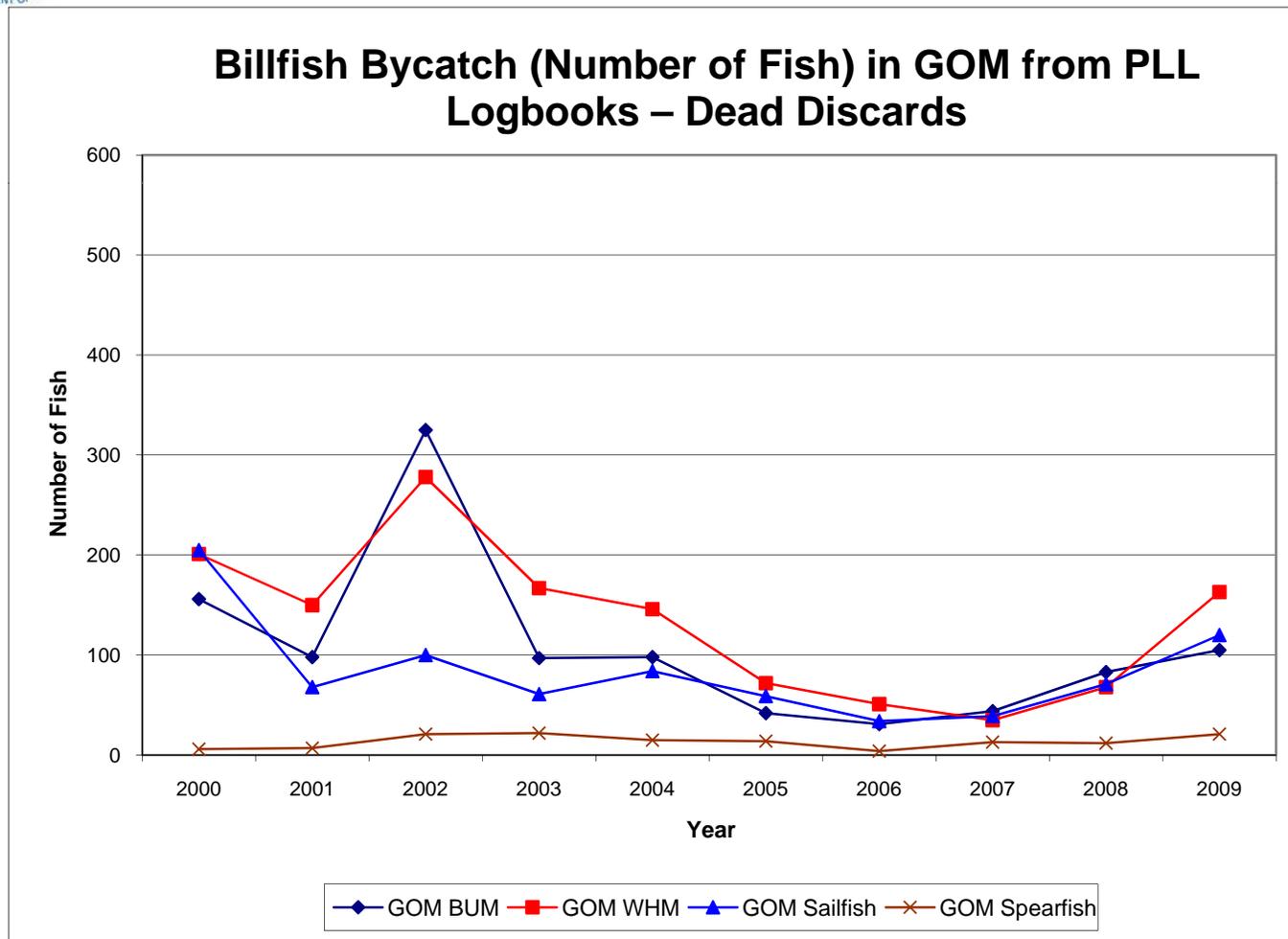


Gulf of Mexico Pelagic Longline Billfish Bycatch



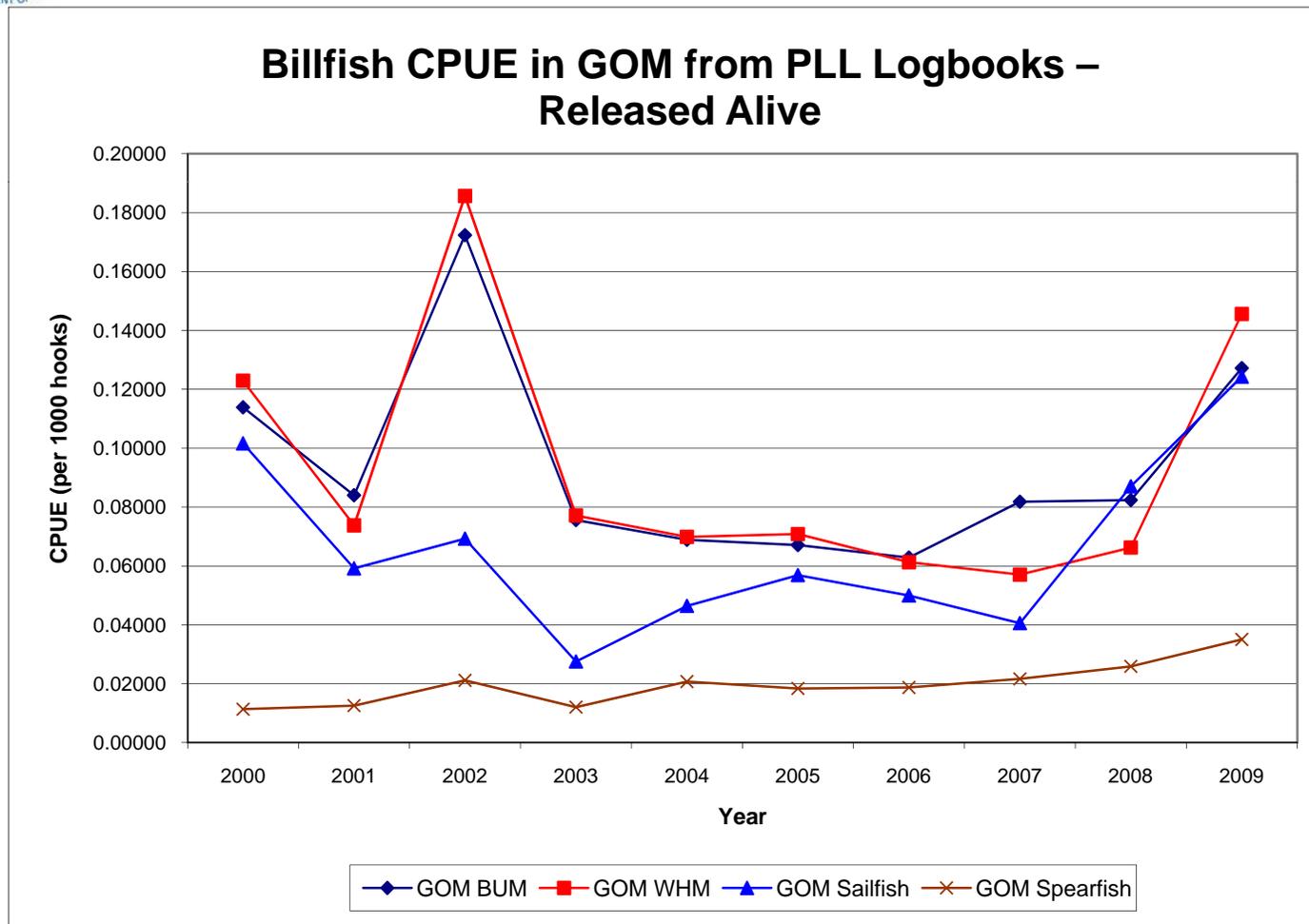


Gulf of Mexico Pelagic Longline Billfish Bycatch



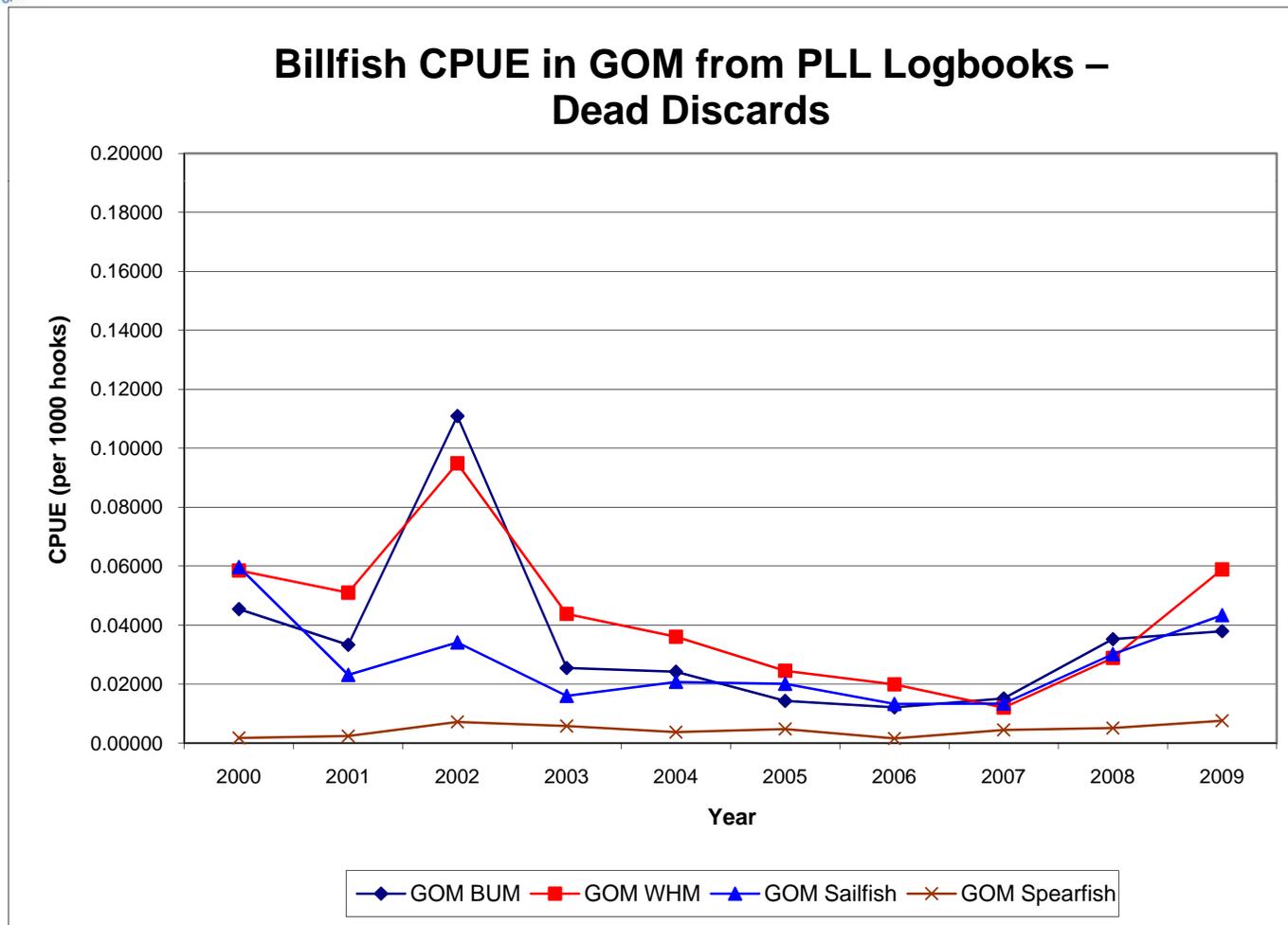


Gulf of Mexico Pelagic Longline Billfish Bycatch



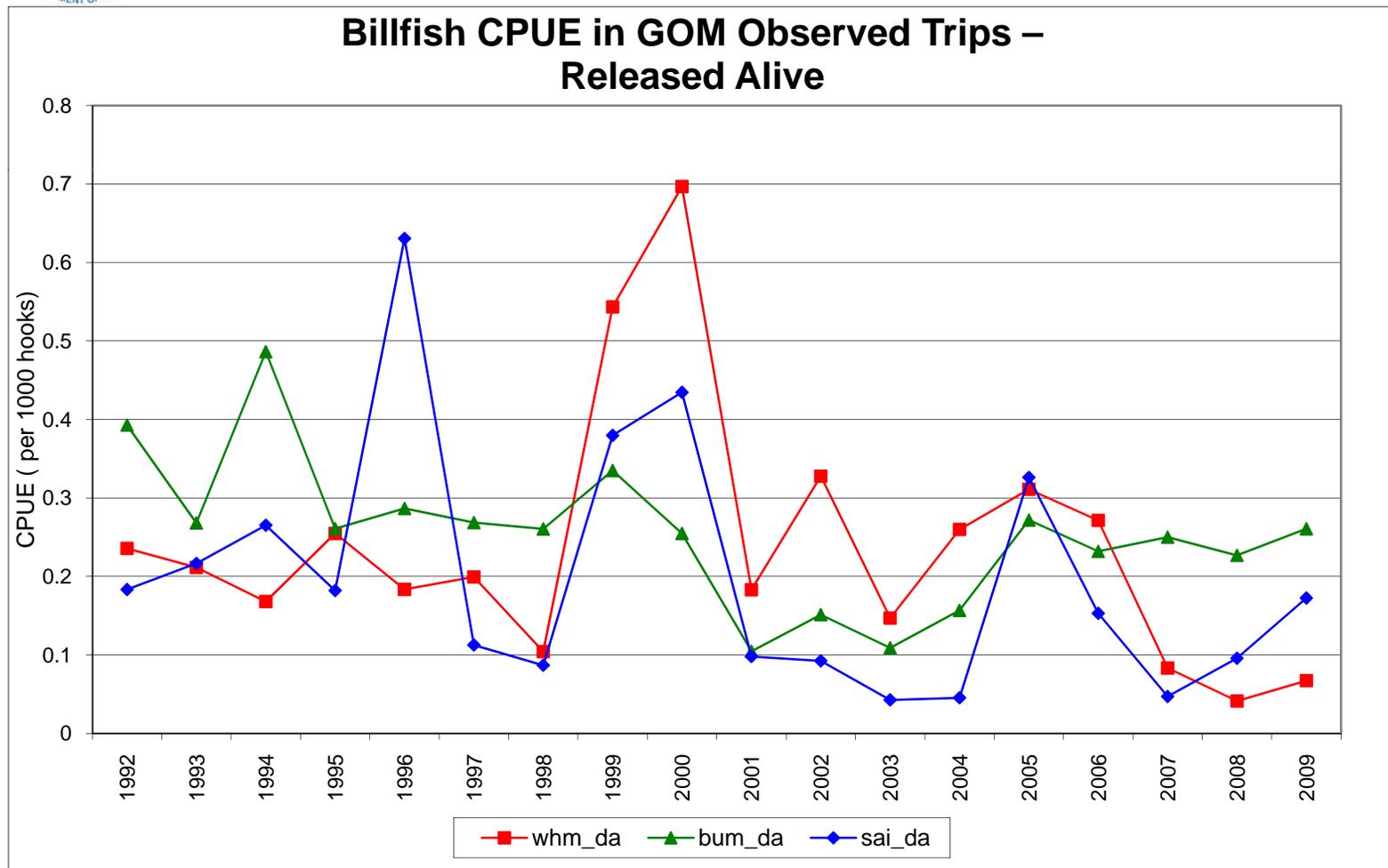


Gulf of Mexico Pelagic Longline Billfish Bycatch



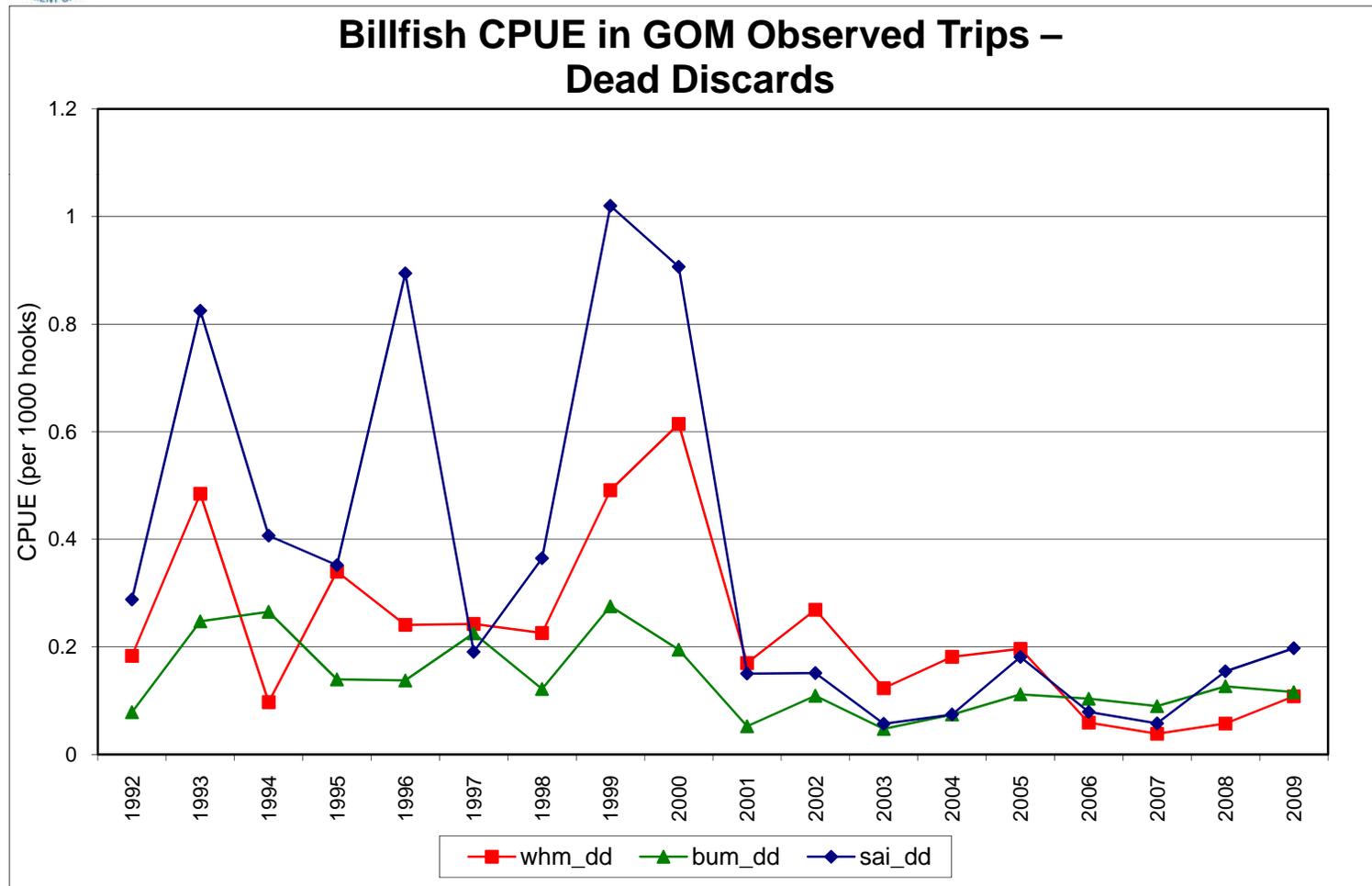


Gulf of Mexico Pelagic Longline Billfish Bycatch



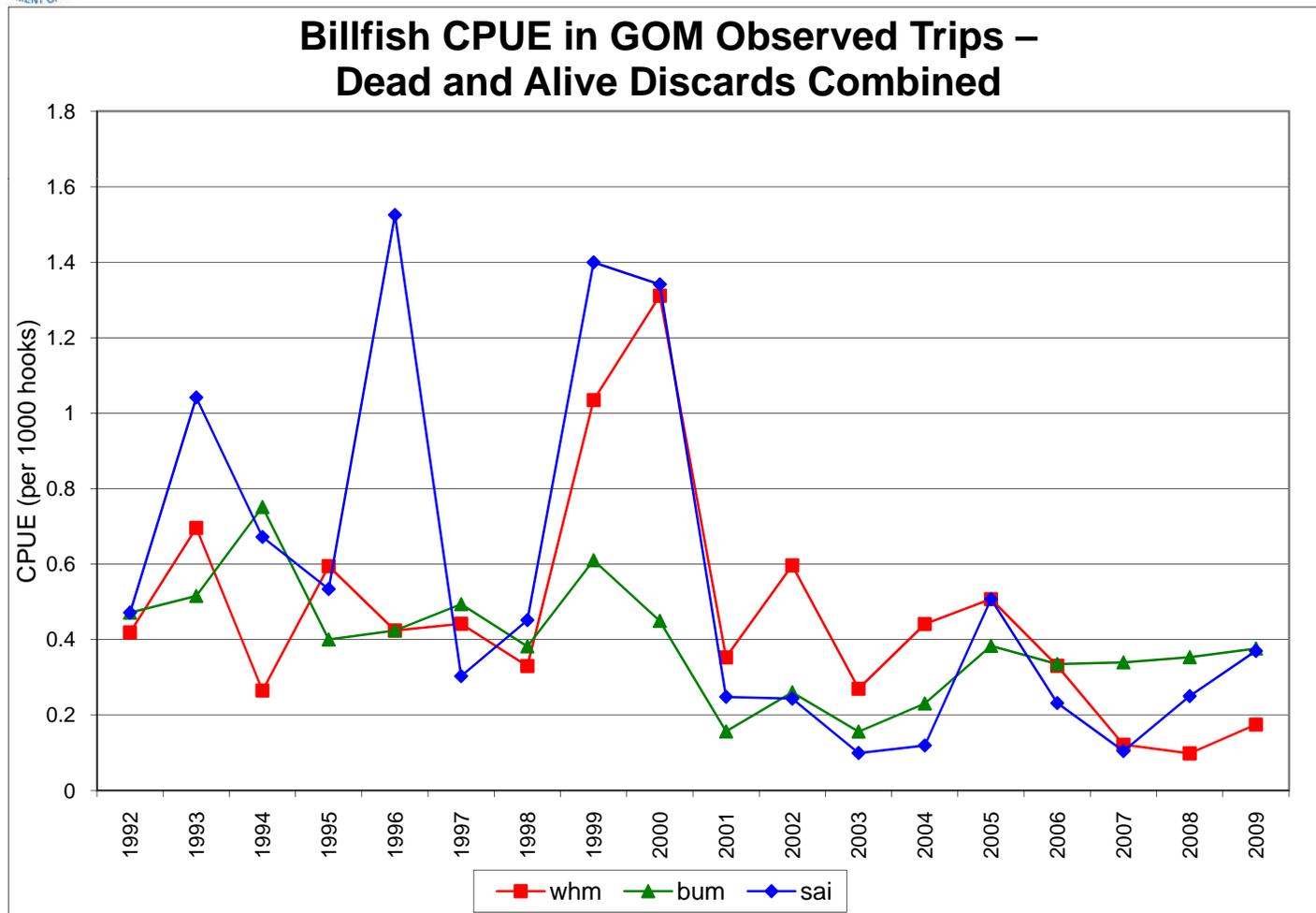


Gulf of Mexico Pelagic Longline Billfish Bycatch





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Gulf of Mexico Pelagic Longline Billfish Bycatch

Preliminary information indicates:

- An observer effect may be noticeable in recent years in the logbook information for billfish catches
- Upward trends in the logbook CPUE for blue marlin and white marlin in recent years are not noticeable in the observer data
- A slight upward trend exists in observer data CPUE for SAI in 2008 and 2009; however, the trend has been variable since 2001

We value your input...

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The End

Thank you!